WHO KILLED JFK?

3-day conference in Providence explores spectrum of possibilities

■ More than 1,000 books have been written covering five different explanations of Kennedy's assassination, and more are on the way.

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PROVIDENCE — Who killed President John F. Kennedy 30 years ago? Spend enough time with the assassination buffs meeting at the Omni Biltmore this weekend and you may find yourself asking: Who didn't?

More than 60 people, most of whom are convinced Lee Harvey Oswald was not the lone gunman (if he was there at all), are immersed in a three-day conference to explore what they believe really happened that day in Dallas.

Respected scientists may have gathered an impressive body of evidence showing that Kennedy was killed by two bullets fired from behind.

But these folks say they can make an even better case showing that multiple gunmen with multiple shots and multiple motives carried out a plot to murder the president.

"Conspiracy in the murder of John Fitzgerald Kennedy is historical fact," said Providence author Charles R. Drago, one of the organizers of the meeting.

The gathering comes in the wake of an unsuccessful plea to the survivors of former Texas Gov. John Connally seeking permission to remove bullet fragments from the body of Connally, who was wounded in the assassination.

Conspiracy buffs say if a chemical analysis of the fragments doesn't match the chemistry of the bullet that supposedly went through Kennedy's neck, it would prove that at least one other gunman was involved. If the fragments weigh too much, it would also show that another bullet was fired at the Kennedy motorcade.

A family spokesman called the request "an appalling attempt to capitalize on Governor Connally's death to gain publicity for worn-out theories." Connally died Tuesday and was buried Thursday.

5 theories, 1,000 books

There are five major theories about who killed Kennedy, said speaker John McLoughlin. They focus on the role of the Mafia, the CIA, a group of Cubans, Communists or members of the military-industrial complex.

McLoughlin will argue in a lecture today that it was a combination of the groups.

"We're going to find that the groups that brought Kennedy to Dallas and had him killed had similar motivations," predicted author George Michael Evica.

One speaker said he didn't think the murderers stopped with Kennedy.

James R. Folliard of Newport said Robert Kennedy was probably killed to protect the assassins. The same group may have murdered Martin Luther King Jr. and then become involved in Watergate and the Reagan administration. The links may look like coincidences, he said, but "I believe there are no coinci-

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dences."

The various theories have spawned an estimated 1,000 Kennedy assassination books, 300 of which are still in print, McLoughlin estimated.

At yesterday's conference, you could select among scores of books, or spend $34.95 for a "JFK Assassination Time-Line Poster," or pick up the first issue of Paranoia magazine, "published four times a year by paranoids."

The magazine is based in Cranston, said assistant editor Joan D'Arc, who believes the limousine driver actually killed the president. Among other theories promoted by D'Arc (who won't give her real name): aliens (as in space aliens) "may have ousted Nixon in '72."

Film doctored

The featured speaker Friday night was Robert Morningstar, a computer specialist from New York who says that the famous Zapruder film showing Kennedy's murder "is a total fabrication."

He said portions were cleverly cut out, artificial frames were added, and the people responsible "made microsurgical incisions to camouflage their mutilation of the film with 'plastic surgery.' "

Morningstar said his analysis has revealed:

- On one blurry frame, a clear spot resembling a speck of dust was probably some sort of talisman hanging from a tree; a bullet from that location was fired at Kennedy.
- Scratchlike marks on various frames that are actually bullet tracks from shots fired from three different buildings. Other scratches were intentionally added to draw attention away from those tracks.
- Dallas police office J. D. Tippit, shot after Kennedy, was killed so his brain could be removed, sent to Washington and presented as Kennedy's brain, all in an attempt to hide evidence of the president's multiple head wounds.

Morningstar also argued that a police officer murdered after the assassination was killed by one of the gunmen who killed Kennedy because the assassins "needed a body they could doctor" to cover up the conspiracy.

The conference even had a drink created in its honor called "the grassy knoll," named after the place where a second gunman supposedly stood when he shot at Kennedy. It's made with at least six shots of liquor, and no chaser.